

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over Hachiya et al., 5,762,851. For the reasons which follow, Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection.

Hachiya et al. disclose a method for reducing the crazing in polycarbonate polymers by subjecting molten polycarbonate to cooling water having a low electrical conductivity. Molten polycarbonate is extruded through a die and either cut at the die head followed by subjecting the molten polymer to the cooling water, or in reverse order, subjecting the molten strands to cooling water followed by cutting.

Each of the claims are patentable because Hachiya et al. do not disclose the treatment of pellets exiting a solid stating reactor. Each of the claims call for contacting pellets exiting a solid stating reactor with liquid water to cool the pellets. Hachiya et al. is silent with regard to any treatment techniques applied to solids, silent with respect to any treatment techniques applied to polymers exiting a solid stating reactor, and silent with respect to cooling solid pellets exiting a solid stating reactor.

The only mention of the solid stating reactor by Hachiya et al. is in the context for making polycarbonates. See column 7, lines 52 – column 8, line 11. The Office Action incorrectly states that Hachiya et al. disclose "polycarbonate pellets produced via solid state polymerization wherein the pellets are cooled". Hachiya et al. does not disclose any technique for the treatment of pellets exiting a solid stating reactor. The cooling water referred to at a temperature in a range of 40° C to lower than 100° C is with reference to the water applied to the molten polycarbonate exiting a die plate, not a solid stating reactor. Subsequent to the application of cooling water to the molten polycarbonate, the water is removed through clean air blower centrifugation techniques. There is no mention of a treatment of solid pellets thereby obtained once the water is removed.

In sum, nothing in Hachiya et al. discloses applying cooling water to a solid, said solid exiting a solid stating reactor. If anything, Hachiya et al. teaches against the claimed invention in suggesting that cooling water should be applied to the molten resin, not a solid resin.

Finally, the Examiner is of the opinion that applying cooling water to solid polyester polymer pellets exiting a solid stating reactor is not of any patentable ingenuity, and that presumably, since it is known that any kind of material can be cooled after exiting a reactor, it is therefore obvious that cooling water should be applied to solid pellets exiting a solid stating reactor.

As is well known, the test for obvious is not whether the claims express patentable ingenuity. No references or publications or any other evidentiary document has been provided to substantiate the assertion that everybody knows that any article exiting any reactor can be cooled with water. Finally, even in the presence of such evidence, there is nothing to suggest that cooling water should be applied in this specific context, that is, applying water to polyester polymer pellets exiting a solid stating reactor, which is a final stage of molecular weight build up.

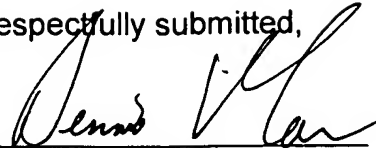
Finally, previous arguments noting the differences between polycarbonates and polyesters are reiterated herein, especially with respect to the failure of Hachiya et al. to suggest to those of ordinary skill in the art that the method employed to cool the polycarbonate should be used in polymers other than polycarbonates.

For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the claims in view of these remarks. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned with any questions related to the further prosecution of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



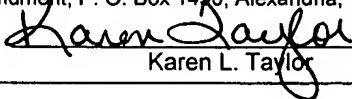
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Date

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Date